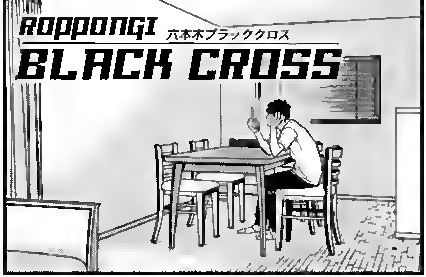
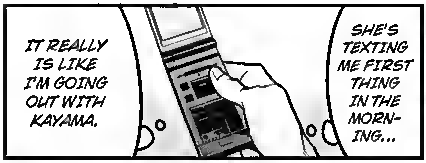
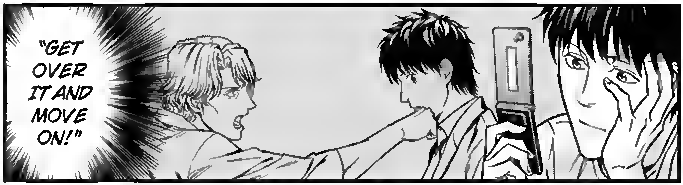


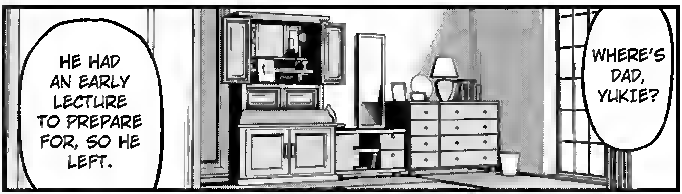




STORY: KIMIO YANAGISAWA
ART: YOUSUKE MORI
TRANSLATION BY JENNIFER J. WARD
ADAPTATION BY ALEXANDRA F. SWANSON
YKS SERVICES LLC/SKY JAPAN, INC

OH... SORRY, SORRY.

IT'S BAD MANNERS TO HAVE YOUR PHONE AT THE TABLE!
TABLE TEXTERS DON'T GET TO EAT MY CURRY!


HE HAD AN EARLY LECTURE TO PREPARE FOR, SO HE LEFT.
WHERE'S DAD, YUKIE?

STILL TEXTING YOUR COLLEGE GIRLFRIEND FIRST THING IN THE MORNING, HUH?
BUT MAN..

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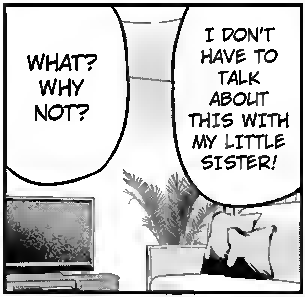
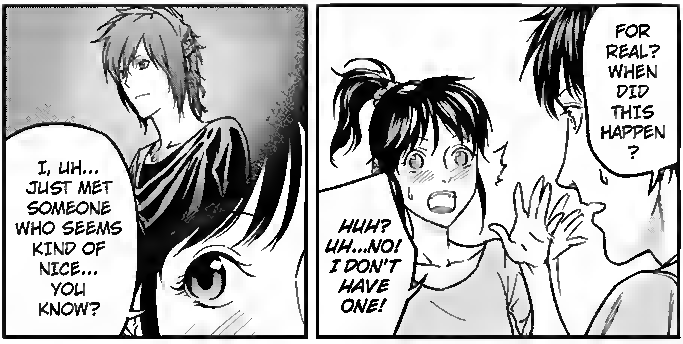
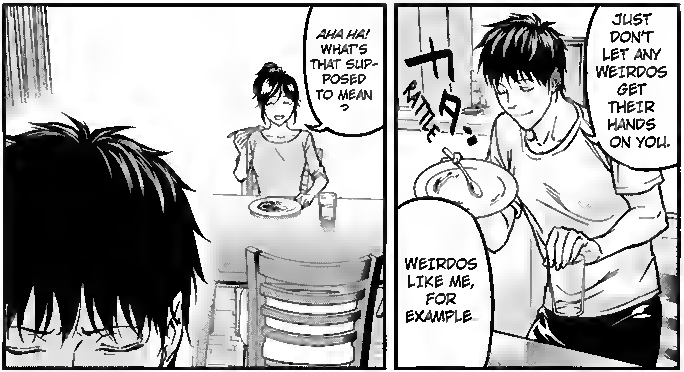
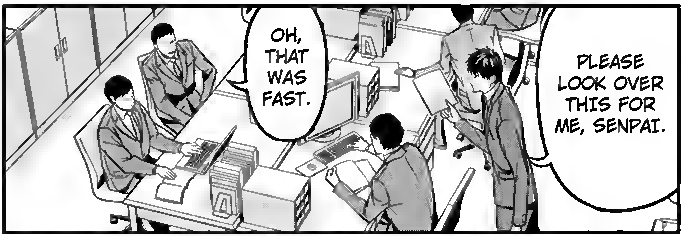


HUH?
BLUSH

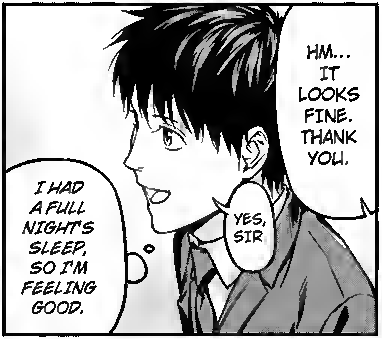

FOR REAL? WHEN DID THIS HAPPEN?
HUH? UH...NO! I DON'T HAVE ONE!
I, UH... JUST MET SOMEONE WHO SEEMS KIND OF NICE... YOU KNOW?

I GOTCHA.


AHA HA! WHAT'S THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN?
PATTE
JUST DON'T LET ANY WEIRDOS GET THEIR HANDS ON YOU.
WEIRDOS LIKE ME, FOR EXAMPLE

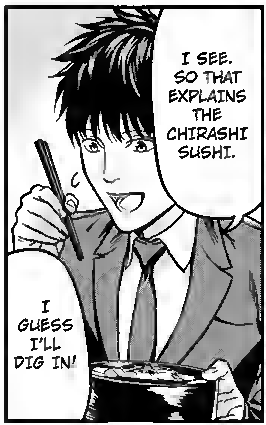

OH, THAT WAS FAST.
PLEASE LOOK OVER THIS FOR ME, SENPAI.

IT'S ALREADY LUNCH. WHY DON'T WE GRAB A BITE TOGETHER?
OH, SURE.
HEY. THERE YOU ARE.


HM... IT LOOKS FINE. THANK YOU.
YES, SIR
I HAD A FULL NIGHT'S SLEEP, SO I'M FEELING GOOD.

YES, SIR.

GET YOUR JACKET, KUROKI.
I'M TAKING YOU TO A NICE PLACE.


I SEE. SO THAT EXPLAINS THE CHIRASHI SUSHI.
I GUESS I'LL DIG IN!

SINCE CHIEF KATSUKI WAS DISCHARGED FROM THE HOSPITAL ...
I WANTED TO CELEBRATE WITH YOU, HIS P.A.

IT'S GOOD! YOU REALLY DO KNOW NICE PLACES.
YOU ALWAYS LOOK LIKE YOU REALLY ENJOY IT, SO IT FEELS WORTHWHILE TO TREAT YOU.
YES, HE IS...
HE'S A BORN WINNER.
BUT I STILL CAN'T BELIEVE CHIEF AKATSUKI WAS ABLE TO RECOVER FROM THAT.
HE'S AN IMPRES-SIVE MAN
YEP.
YES, AND THAT'S WHY!..

...THAT'S WHY I CAN'T STAND THE MAN!
HE WIGGLES SO EASILY OUT OF A PREDICAMENT THAT WOULD CRUSH ANYONE ELSE.
I'VE BUILT MY CAREER SLOWLY AND METICULOUSLY...
BUT HE'S OVERTAKING ME BY LEAPS AND BOUNDS USING THE TALENT AND BLOOD HE WAS BORN WITH!

YEAH... IT WOULD ...
IT WOULD BE NICE IF THE THREE OF US COULD CELEBRATE HIS RECOVERY TOGETHER!
AND AFTER THAT, I'LL BURY HIM...
I'LL TREAT HIM TO THE BEST SAKE .. POURED OVER HIS GRAVE!
HM ...?
STEP
OHO! YOSHIDA-SAN!
SUSHI IN THE MIDDLE OF THE WEEK?
GOT SOMETHING TO CELEBRATE?

HEY. I SUPPOSE WE DO.
OHO.
WHY DON'T YOU HAVE SOME TOO, FOR LUCK?
BIG WIN
DERBY
I DON'T FEEL GOOD ABOUT HAVING SUSHI JUST FOR THAT.
WHO WAS THAT?
OH...
HIS NAME IS AGA-SAN.
HE'S A VETERAN DETECTIVE AT THE ASABU STATION THAT HANDLES THE ROPPONGI JURISDICTION.
DETEC-TIVE... AGA...

KOUTAROU DOES NOT YET KNOW THAT THIS IS NOT JUST ANY OLD ENCOUNTER...